



Colleen's Communications

August 2019

To all Ontario members,

It is my honour to be representing you as provincial president.

The Catholic Women's League taught me the importance of prayer and showed me the unexplainable power of the rosary. That is the reason I have chosen the rosary as the symbol for my signatures and messages. I use the rosary daily to ask Our Lady to help me open my heart and mind to the things that the Holy Spirit is trying to tell me. Joining the Catholic Women's League in 2003 put me on a path to the best spiritual development I could ever imagine. I want to share that passion for prayer with you. I ask that you pray the rosary as often as you can. Keep all members in your prayers as we strive for increased faith development, undying commitment to service and social justice for all.

While considering the goal of my term I quickly realized that I did not want to lose the momentum gained from Anne's focus on homelessness. How could we continue to support those most vulnerable and yet grow in our understanding of their circumstances? I attended an advent retreat in Ottawa where I heard Fr. Mark Slatter talk about "Homelessness and the Holy Family". In his talk he mentioned loneliness and the different types of loneliness. The words caught my ear and the Holy Spirit took hold. **Loneliness** will be our focus for this term.

There are initiatives all over the world to alleviate loneliness. In the United Kingdom a police officer who was investigating a fraud case found the success of the fraud was accelerated by the victim's loneliness. In response to his findings he put a sign up on a park bench to encourage people sitting there to "chat" safely. The story can be found at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2019/07/17/this-towns-solution-loneliness-chat-bench/>.

Another story is from a village in France where a school principal responded to a community senior who "joked" that seniors should be invited to lunch with the school children in the newly renovated school cafeteria. The program is so successful that several other towns are working to implement it. The article states it is a win-win for both students and seniors. Read more here <https://aleteia.org/2019/07/31/how-one-village-in-france-is-ending-loneliness-among-its-seniors/>.

What can we do to alleviate loneliness in our homes, families, churches and communities? What services are available in your area? Start there. You will hear more from the OPC executive team in the fall. I look forward to hearing your comments as I travel around the province over the next two years.

Yours in faith,

Colleen